

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for triggering an electronic device and for receiving power for the device comprising:
  - an AC adaptor port that receives a signal;
  - 5 a mode control element having an input connected to the AC adaptor port, the mode control element receives the signal from the AC adaptor port; and
  - an event monitor connected to the AC adaptor port that monitors the signal for a signal event,
    - wherein the signal is a power signal when produced by an external power
    - 10 source, and wherein the signal is an event signal when produced by an external trigger source, such that the event monitor triggers the device upon detection of the signal event.
2. The apparatus of Claim 1 further comprising a power supply connected to an output of the mode control element, wherein in a first mode, the mode control
- 15 element communicates the power signal to the power supply, and wherein in a second mode, the mode control element isolates the power supply from the AC adaptor port.
3. The apparatus of Claim 2, further comprising a battery connected to the power supply, wherein in the first mode, the power supply charges the battery with the power signal, and wherein in second mode, the power supply draws power from
- 20 the battery.
4. The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the external trigger source is a sensor.
5. The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the event monitor monitors a parameter of the signal and in the second mode, the event monitor compares the parameter value to a threshold value to determine an occurrence of the signal event.
- 25 6. The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the parameter is a voltage of the signal and the threshold value is a predefined threshold voltage.

7. The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the parameter is a voltage transition in the signal and the threshold value is a predefined transition voltage.

8. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the event monitor is an analog to digital converter that digitizes a parameter of the signal and communicates the digitized parameter to the device, and wherein the device compares the digitized parameter to a threshold value and determines whether the signal event has occurred, such that upon detection of the signal event, the device performs an action.

9. An apparatus for triggering an electronic device, the apparatus having a first operational mode and an independent second operational mode, the apparatus comprising:

an AC adaptor port that accepts power from an external power source while the apparatus is in the first operational mode, and that accepts a signal from an external trigger source while the apparatus is in the second operational mode, such that the AC adaptor port is an interface port for the electronic device and the external trigger source.

10. The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein the apparatus further comprises: a mode control element connected to the AC adaptor/trigger interface port; and an event monitor connected to the AC adaptor/trigger interface port, wherein while the apparatus is in the second mode, the event monitor monitors a parameter of the signal applied to the AC adaptor/trigger interface port for a signal event occurrence, and wherein the apparatus triggers the device upon detecting the occurrence.

11. An AC adaptor port apparatus for an electronic device comprising: a first operational mode, wherein the apparatus accepts power from an external power source for the electronic device; and

an independent second operational mode, wherein the apparatus acts as a trigger source interface port that accepts and processes a signal from an external trigger source for triggering an action by the electronic device.

12. The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein the apparatus further comprises:  
a mode control element connected to the AC adaptor/trigger interface port; and  
an event monitor connected to the AC adaptor/trigger interface port,  
wherein while the apparatus is in the second mode, the event monitor monitors a  
5 parameter of the signal applied to the AC adaptor/trigger interface port for a signal  
event occurrence, and wherein the apparatus triggers the device upon detecting the  
occurrence.

13. A method of triggering an electronic device that has an AC adaptor port  
for receiving power from a power source, the method comprising the steps of:  
10 setting a mode of operation for the device, wherein the mode of operation is  
either trigger mode or non trigger mode; and  
while the trigger mode is set, the method further comprises the steps of:  
monitoring a parameter of a signal applied to the AC adaptor port;  
comparing the parameter to a threshold according to a predefined comparison  
15 condition to determine if a signal event has occurred; and  
triggering the device upon detection of the signal event.

14. The method of Claim 13 wherein in the step of comparing, the  
comparison condition is whether the parameter is greater than, less than, and/or equal  
to the threshold, or a transition from the threshold.

20 15. The method of Claim 13 wherein the parameter is one or more of a  
voltage, a current, and a frequency of the signal.

16. The method of Claim 13 wherein the step of setting the mode further  
comprises the steps of:  
establishing an external trigger source to produce the signal that is applied to the  
25 AC adaptor port;  
selecting a comparison condition; and  
setting a threshold value.

17. A method of triggering an electronic device to perform an action at a location remote to a user of the device, the device having an AC adaptor port, the method comprising the steps of:

5 setting an operational mode for the device to either a trigger mode or a non trigger mode, wherein in non trigger mode, the AC adaptor port serves as a power supply port and receives a power signal, and wherein in the trigger mode, the AC adaptor port serves as a trigger source interface port and receives a signal from an external trigger source; and

10 triggering the device to perform the action when a predefined signal event occurs in the signal from the external trigger source and the operational mode is set to trigger mode.

18. The method of Claim 17, further comprising the steps of establishing the external trigger source; and defining the signal event to trigger the device before the step of triggering.

15 19. An electronic device having an AC adaptor port comprising:  
a first operational mode where the AC adaptor port receives a power signal from an external power source; and

20 a second operational mode where the AC adaptor port receives a signal from an external event trigger source, such that upon an occurrence of a predefined signal event, the second mode will trigger the device to perform an action.

20. The electronic device of Claim 19, wherein the second operational mode comprises:

a mode control element connected to the AC adaptor port that prevents the device from receiving the power signal at the AC adaptor port; and

25 an event monitor connected to the AC adaptor port that monitors the external event trigger signal for the occurrence of the signal event.

21. The electronic device of Claim 19, wherein the external event trigger source and the device are remotely located to a user of the device.

22. An electronic device that is triggerable by an external event trigger source and having a first mode and a second mode, the device comprising:

an AC adaptor port, the AC adaptor port providing power to the device while the device is in the first mode, and the AC adaptor port providing an event trigger interface port while the device is in the second mode.

23. The device of Claim 22 wherein the device is a digital camera.

24. The device of Claim 23, wherein the digital camera comprises a control program stored in memory that provides the second mode of the camera.

25. The device of Claim 24 wherein the digital camera further comprises:  
a controller that controls the operation of the camera;  
an imaging subsystem that captures and records an optical image and transforms the captured image into a digital image;  
a memory subsystem that stores digital images in the memory;  
an interface subsystem that provides a user interface for the digital camera; and  
a power subsystem that provides power to the camera,  
wherein the controller executes the control program, and wherein the control program further provides operational control and coordination of the imaging subsystem, the memory subsystem, the interface subsystem and the power subsystem.

26. A digital camera having a trigger mode that can be enabled and disabled, the digital camera comprising:

an AC adaptor port;  
a controller that controls the operation of the camera;  
an imaging subsystem that captures and records an optical image and transforms the captured image into a digital image;  
a memory subsystem that stores digital images in memory;  
an interface subsystem that provides a user interface for the digital camera;  
a power subsystem that provides power to the camera; and

a control program stored in the memory subsystem that when executed by the controller provides operational control and coordination of the subsystems,

wherein while the trigger mode is enabled, the AC adaptor port is a trigger source interface port, such that an event signal applied to the interface port can trigger  
5 an image recording action by the camera, and wherein while the trigger mode is disabled, the AC adaptor port is a power supply port, such that a power signal applied to the supply port supplies operational power to the power subsystem.

27. The digital camera of Claim 26, wherein the power subsystem comprises:

- 10 a power supply connected to the AC adaptor port;  
a monitor connected to the AC adaptor port; and  
a battery connected to the power supply,  
wherein while the trigger mode is enabled, the power supply is electrically isolated from the AC adaptor port and the power supply draws power from the  
15 battery, and wherein while the trigger mode is disabled, the power supply can draw power from the AC adaptor port.

28. The digital camera of Claim 27, wherein while the trigger mode is enabled, the event signal applied to the AC adaptor port is monitored by the monitor for the occurrence of a signal event, and wherein upon detection of the signal event,  
20 the controller triggers the camera.

29. The digital camera of Claim 27, wherein while the trigger mode is disabled, the power that can be drawn from the AC adaptor port charges the battery.